



PRESS RELEASE

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USDA-NASS TO CONDUCT FRUIT CHEMICAL USE SURVEY

Olympia, October 2005 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (USDA-NASS) will conduct the Fruit Chemical Use Survey this fall to gather reliable, objective information about pesticides used on fruit crops. Information gathered from growers in 12 states, including Washington, will be used to set state and national estimates on use of pesticides on 24 fruit crops.

A local interviewer from NASS will contact fruit growers in October to collect information on fruit crops such as pesticides used, acres treated, and rates applied.

“Because of the challenges and unique issues facing today’s fruit growers, participation in this survey is vital. Only by contacting growers directly can NASS compile and publish the most reliable statistics possible,” said Chris Messer, Director of the USDA-NASS Washington Field Office.

“These statistics will give growers an opportunity to tell how they use agricultural chemicals responsibly to produce a safe and abundant food supply for the United States and the world,” Messer added. “Survey results are official USDA data that help to clarify the facts about chemical use in agriculture. This information is used in the decision-making process for the Food Quality Protection Act, which has an impact on pesticide registrations, re-registrations, and product alternatives.”

USDA-NASS closely guards the confidentiality of all survey responses. “Data collected from individual operations are combined with other responses to provide the needed information. We will not disclose any data about an individual operation,” Messer said.

NASS will publish the *Fruit Chemical Usage* report with state and national estimates of fruit growers’ use of agricultural chemicals in July 2006. For a copy of this report or to obtain other agricultural statistics visit the NASS Web site: www.nass.usda.gov.

Support for this survey includes the following organizations : Washington Tree Fruit Research Commission, Washington Association of Wine Grape Growers, Northwest Horticultural Council, Washington Red Raspberry Commission, Washington Fruit Commission, Washington Apple Commission, Washington Growers Clearing House, and others.